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March 13, 2000

Federal Caucus Comment Record
C/O BPA-PL
707 West Main Street, Suite 500
Spokane, WA 99201

RE: Comment on "All-H Paper"

The United Southeast Alaska Gillnetters Association is non-profit group representing 200 gillnet permit holders.

We are opposed to Alternatives "B" and "D". These two alternatives call for a reduction in ocean fisheries of 50%-75%. This type of restriction would be devastating to the chinook fisheries of Southeast Alaska. Impacts would be felt by Subsistence, Sport and Commercial (troll, seine & gillnet) fishermen and the small coastal communities of Southeast Alaska. To reduce the chinook catch any is unthinkable at this time. We have for the last 20 years taken reductions in our fisheries for the recovery of Snake and Columbia River salmon. These reduction have not helped in anyway in the past, why do you think additional restriction on Alaskan fisheries will suddenly produce different results.

In 1999, new annexes of the Pacific Salmon Treaty were signed. During the negotiation process considerations were taken to help protect the Snake and Columbia River chinook as in the past with concessions made by Canada. The National Marine Fisheries Service issued a Biological Opinion in December 1999 with the determination that the 1999 Pacific Salmon Treaty met the Endangered Species Act requirements as a conservation plan.

The 1999 Pacific Salmon Treaty emphasized the need to seek to seek solutions to salmon recovery through habitat improvement and safe passage not just harvest reductions.

We are not telling the Pacific Northwest how to deal with their problems but we know that Alaska does not have the answer to the problem and that they need to look in their own backyard for solutions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathy Hansen".

Kathy Hansen
Executive Director